



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Billings Trap Club

2. Type of Proposed Action:

Provide enhanced access to all shooting positions: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access Paths, ADA Shower and Bath Hose Remodel, and Electrical Improvements (See Paragraph 10).

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: The Billings Trap Club north of Billings, in Yellowstone County, Montana. Billings Trap Club is located east of Pemberton Lane, and west of US 87 (Roundup Road), on the east-northeast end of Lake Elmo (Holling Reservoir). Located on 78.43 acres in Township 1 N., Range 26 E., Section 10 – that portion of SW1/4SE1/4 and of NW1/4SE1/4 lying east of the public highway. (See figure 1)

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The 2007 Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges for public purposes. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

5. Need for the Action(s): Currently none of the building facilities, restrooms, shooting trap stations, and RV hookup locations, are handicap accessible. The club has current members and non-members who have physical limitation due to injuries and other health related reasons that have resulted in a disability and not being mobile. Consequently these shooters have had to discontinue shooting or continue to shoot with difficulty.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): Improve access to the shooting and building facilities for all shooters including shooters requiring access paths compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or with physical limitation where the ADA compliant access paths provide more desirable access to the facilities. Provide electrical improvements insuring a consistent and reliable supply of power to the shooting range, building facilities and site RV hook ups so that Voltage drop does not occur and damage the voice activated clay pigeon throwers as well as tripping breakers during combined facility use.

Billings Trap Club
Yellowstone County, Montana

Five Mile

Lake Elmo (Holling Res)

Legend

Billings Trap Club

SCALE
1:12,000
1 inch equals 0.2 miles
Photo Date: 1996

MAP IS INTENDED TO SERVE AS A VISUAL GUIDE
AND ITS ACCURACY IS NOT WARRANTED

January 2004
Norman C. Wheeler
&
Associates
Bozeman, Montana

Figure 1 – Billings Trap Club

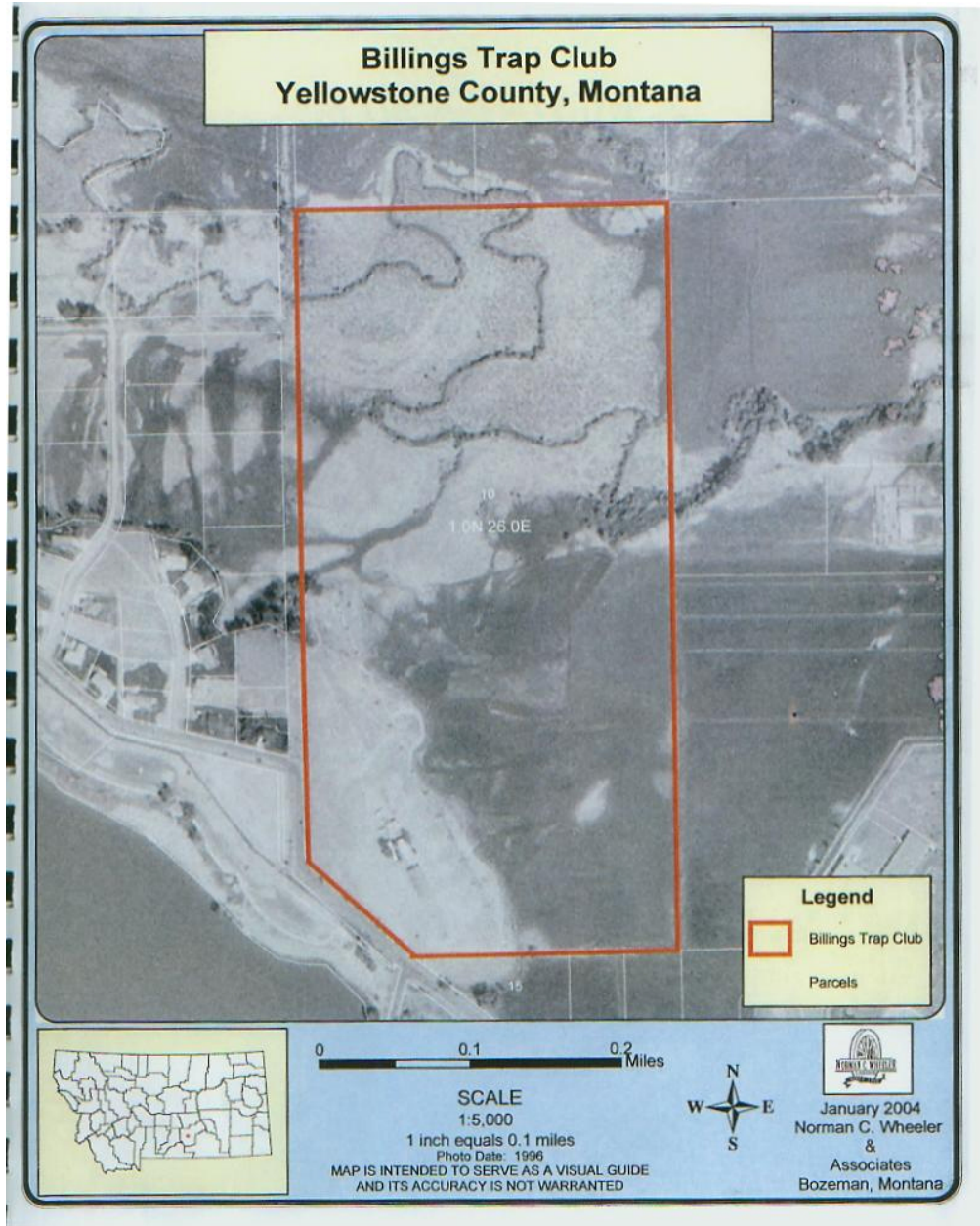


Figure 2 – Billings Trap Club



Figure 3 – Existing Utilities



Figure 4 – Phase I Project

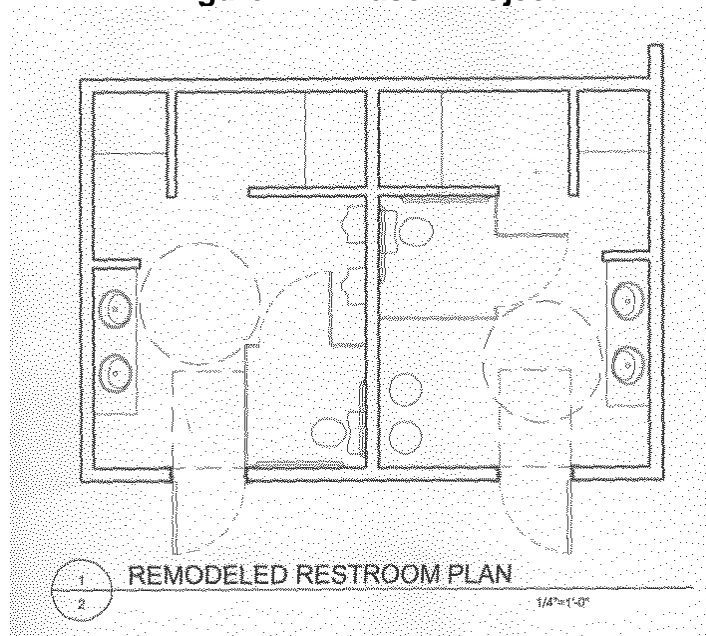


Figure 5 – Phase 1 Proposed ADA compliant Restroom Floor Plan



Figure 6 – Phase II Project

8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The area for the ranges is 78.43 acres, with improvements safely spread out within the club properties. (Figures 1 and 2).

9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The area affected is the existing Billings Trap Club, which has been in place for over 54 years and proposed actions will have little impact on the surrounding environment. It is bordered on the southwest by Lake Elmo and has a portion of Five Mile Creek in the north of the range. Lake Elmo is surrounded by Lake Elmo State Park and FWP Region 5 headquarters. In the past 54 years the city limits of Billings have moved up along the southern, western and lower eastern portions and residential development expanding in the area. Historically the surrounding land, on several sides was primarily used for grazing and is slowly becoming urbanized. (See Figures 1 and 2).

10. Description of Project:

Provide enhanced access to all shooting positions: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access Paths, ADA Shower and Bath Hose Remodel, and Electrical Improvements. Three areas of improvement are projected in 2 phases.

Phase I (See Figure 4) -

1. Construct ADA compliant access paths/sidewalks to, from and along the shooting venue, between the southern 6 trap houses and the building facilities. This will entail site grading, concrete work and seeding of disturbed area.
2. Remodel the existing bath and shower house restroom facilities to be ADA compliant. This will require the removal of and reinstallation of exterior doors, sinks, faucets, counter tops and toilet partitions and some demolition before resetting or installing new equipment. See Figure 5 for diagram of new ADA compliant restroom.
3. Electrical system upgrades will separate the power service between the shooting ranges (trap houses) and the other buildings/facilities from the RV and vendor area, by providing an additional power source. See Figure 3 for existing utilities and Figure 4 for the effected area.

Phase II (See Figure 6) – Complete any unfunded projects from Phase I and continue the ADA compliant access paths/sidewalks to, from and along the shooting venue, between the remaining northern 8 trap houses.

In Accordance With (IAW) contracts agreements with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, all projects are to be completed by June 30, 2009.

11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

Agency Name	Permit
N/A	

Funding:

Agency Name	Funding Amount
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$120,447

12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or

Supporting Groups: The trap Club has been private club since it's inception in 1953. The club provides regular shooting that is open to the general public. Anyone can purchase membership in the trap club and there are no membership limits. Shooting is open to the general public, for a fee, 52 weeks a year. The club averages 40 teams of up to 250 shooters for Trap Shooting Leagues. The club currently averages about 7,237 shooter days per year. The 2009 State shoot in will add about 300 additional shooters for 5 days for an additional 1,500 shooter days.

Current Users:

1. Billings Trap Club Open Shooters
2. Billings Trap Club League shoots (April through September)
3. Big Sky State Games (July)
4. Chase Hawks Fund Raising Shoot (August)

5. Periodic Corporate shoots (Ferguson Enterprises, Monsanto Chemical, Agricultural Operations, etc.)
6. Usually 8 ATA trap shoots (March through September)
7. Scholastic Clay Target Program
8. Scholastic Clay Target Coaches Training
9. Range Safety Officer Training

Anticipated Users:

1. Hunter Education
2. Ducks Unlimited (Green Wings)
3. 4-H
4. Boy & Girl Scouts

13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public

Involvement: Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors.

14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

Paul Evan or Lance Lovell, P.O. Box 415, Billings, MT 59103 (406) 672-9807

16. Other Pertinent Information: All 78 acres of the Billings Trap Club is owned in Fee Simple. The Billings Trap Club in conjunction with the Sportsman's Conservation Club of Huntley, MT Aka Huntley Trap Club are creating a non Profit 501 (c) (3) organization titled the Yellowstone Shooting Sports Foundation for the purpose of improving shooting opportunities throughout the Billings and Yellowstone county area. The formation of this 501 (c) (3) organization is anticipated to be complete by late 2008.

Additional and/or matching funds have been applied for through the NRA Foundation Grant Program.

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance.

Resolution Date: April 3, 2008

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

Part III. Environmental Consequences

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? NO

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in paragraph 10 (Description of Project) to provide enhanced access to all shooting positions: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Access Paths, ADA Shower and Bath Hose Remodel, and Electrical Improvements.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Sports Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active trap range without proposed expansion and improvements.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Two alternatives have been considered, **A** (Proposed Alternative) and **B** (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (**A**) nor the no action alternative (**B**) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences to Acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative (A)** increasing shooting sports opportunities in the Billings area by insuring access for the handicapped and in improving reliable electric service to the range complex.

- The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be not to improve handicapped access to the range and improved electrical service, but to continue on with present facilities. Land use would remain the same. Present activities include trap ranges without the proposed improvements to the operations. Therefore the proposed alternative is the prudent alternative.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

NONE

List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):

NONE

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

Paul Even, Billings Trap Club, 2499 Lake Elmo Dr., Billings, MT 59103.
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

PART IV NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being proposed are on lands owned by the Billings Trap Club. The low impact activities proposed, the increased recreational opportunity, and the improved access for the handicapped, all indicate that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The 55-year history of the Billings Trap Club providing shooting opportunities to its members and the public indicates support for the proposed alternative. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the modernization and expansion proposals outlined in Para. 2 & 10.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN
Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: June 26, 2008

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

None required.

Describe public involvement, if any:

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Billings Gazette and on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website to allow an opportunity for public review. Additionally the EA will be available for review on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website.